



Congresswoman Lois Capps

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Capps Domestic Violence Bill Included in Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act

President Expected to Sign Legislation Shortly

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congresswoman Lois Capps announced that critical provisions of her domestic violence bill passed the House and Senate as part of the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act (HR 3402). These provisions will improve the health care system's response to domestic and family violence, dating violence, and sexual assault.

"This legislation will help battered women and children get the assistance they need from someone they trust – their doctor or nurse," Capps said. "In addition to being a criminal justice issue, domestic violence is also a matter of public health. Health professionals are often in the best position to identify victims of violence before the abuse becomes life threatening. This bill will ensure that victims of domestic violence who visit their doctors will have a better chance to receive the help they desperately need."

The provisions included in the bill were part of the Domestic Violence Screening, Treatment, and Prevention Act (HR 4367), introduced in the House by Rep. Capps. They provide funding over the next five years for the training of health professionals to recognize and respond to signs of domestic violence. The Capps language will provide grants to states and local communities to strengthen their public health response to domestic violence. And this legislation will provide funding for research on health care interventions to prevent domestic violence by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Health Research and Quality (AHRQ). Rep. Capps has introduced versions of this legislation in the past three sessions of Congress.

Esta Soler, President of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, said "One of the most important new initiatives in the Violence Against Women Act of 2005 was championed by Congresswoman Lois Capps. It is a measure that will dramatically improve the health care response to domestic violence by training health care providers to identify victims of abuse and provide the intervention and support they need. This provision will literally save lives it would not have been included without Congresswoman Capps' tireless work. We are tremendously grateful."